

STARBLAZER

FANTASY FICTION IN PICTURES No. 197

26p

THE LAW LORD



**DON'T FORGET THIS
MONTH'S *OTHER***



On sale at your newsagent's *NOW!*

THE LAW LORD

RULING OF GREATER GALACTIC COUNCIL ... PLANETS OF CULTURES RANGING FROM PRIMITIVE FISSION TO PREQUANTUM, SHALL BE DEEMED AS PROTECTED AND FORBIDDEN ALL SUCH OUTSIDE CONTACT AS MAY INTERFERE WITH THEIR NATURAL DEVELOPMENT. THE ENFORCING OF THIS LAW BEING THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE DULY APPOINTED LAW LORD.

SOL-THREE — ONLY LIFE-SUPPORTING PLANET OF A G-2 YELLOW DWARF ...



DOWN IN A
RUSTIC CORNER
OF PLANET EARTH,
CIRCA 1987.

GOOD SHOT, RIK.

ONE MORE SHOT LIKE THAT AND
WE'VE GOT THE MATCH, RIK.

LEAVE IT ME, JOEY — TO ME ...
ER, TO ME ...







A LIGHT GLOWED, BRIGHTER
AND BRIGHTER, UNTIL ...

... BOYLE FELL ...




8

I REGRET THE DISCOMFORT OF
ACTIVATING YOUR CEREBRAL
IMPLANT, RIK BOYLE, LAW LORD,
BUT IT IS AN URGENT MATTER.
A REPORT FROM MOONSCAN
OF AN INTRUDER.



A WARSHIP OF TRADER
TYPE — WHICH HAS MADE A
LANDING IN DEFIANCE OF
THE CHALLENGE
AUTOMATICALLY BEAMED
AT IT.



VESSEL IS NOW SHELTERED BY
AN ENERGY SHIELD IN AN
ISOLATED REGION OF NORTH
AFRICA. THIS AMOUNTS TO
DELIBERATE DISOBEDIENCE OF
COUNCIL RULING ON PROTECTED
PLANETS.

I SHALL NEED A
TRANSPORTER.

I SUPPOSE I'D BETTER TAKE
THAT THING AS WELL.

MOST DEFINITELY, ACCORDING
TO REGULATIONS, LAW LORD.



I NEVER HAVE SEEN THE POINT OF
PUTTING A DASH OF ARTIFICIAL
INTELLIGENCE IN A WEAPON.

THE NEED OF LOGIC TO BALANCE
THE EMOTIONAL FRAILTY OF A LIFE
FORM SUCH AS YOURSELF IN THE
USE OF SUCH A DANGEROUS
INSTRUMENT.

MENTAL LINK
ESTABLISHED.

A JOB, EH, LAW LORD . . . THIRTY
PLANETARY YEARS ON. I ASSUME
SUCH A PERIOD OF RUSTICITY
HAS DONE LITTLE TO IMPROVE
YOUR DEPLORABLE
MARKSMANSHIP.

IT CERTAINLY HASN'T DONE
MUCH FOR YOUR
MANNERS.



REGULATIONS, LAW LORD! I AM
ENTITLED TO TEST YOUR
CAPABILITY.

IF ONLY I COULD FIND
SOMETHING IN REGULATIONS
ABOUT ANNOYING GUNS! TARGET
SIMULATION PLEASE.

THERE WAS SUDDEN CHANGE, AS BOYLE WAS
BEAMED INTO AN ELECTRONIC TEST AREA.



LET'S HOPE FOR
SOMETHING
REALLY NASTY.



AGAIN THERE WAS CHANGE ...

YEAH ... BUT
NOT BY MUCH!

ADVISE DEPUTY-
COMMANDER I AM
TRANSPORTING TO
INVESTIGATE
INTRUDER.

SLOW, OFF TARGET, AND A
STUN BEAM WOULD BE OF NO
USE AGAINST A TRILION-TREE
CAT.


BOYLE TRANSPORTED ...

REPORT SHOULD REACH HIM BY
WARPBEAM IN TWENTY PLANETARY
DAY PERIODS.

... TO THE DESERT.

AN ENERGY SHIELD — YET NO
LIGHT-BENDING SYSTEM. IT'S
AS IF OUR INTRUDER WISHES
TO ATTRACT ATTENTION.

CAUTION IS SUGGESTED. PERSONS
SO READY TO BREAK THE LAW ARE
LIKELY TO BE ARMED.

A black and white comic book panel showing a man with short, dark hair aiming a large, futuristic energy weapon. The weapon has a long barrel with a pointed tip and a smaller cylindrical section near the trigger. The man is wearing a dark jacket with a strap across his chest. The background is a dark, starry space with some rocky terrain in the distance.

ON FULL CHARGE COULD YOU
BLAST A HOLE IN THAT SHIELD?

NO PROBLEM — EXCEPT I WOULD ALSO
VAPORISE ONE OF THOSE MOUNTAINS SHOULD
YOUR AIM BE OFF.

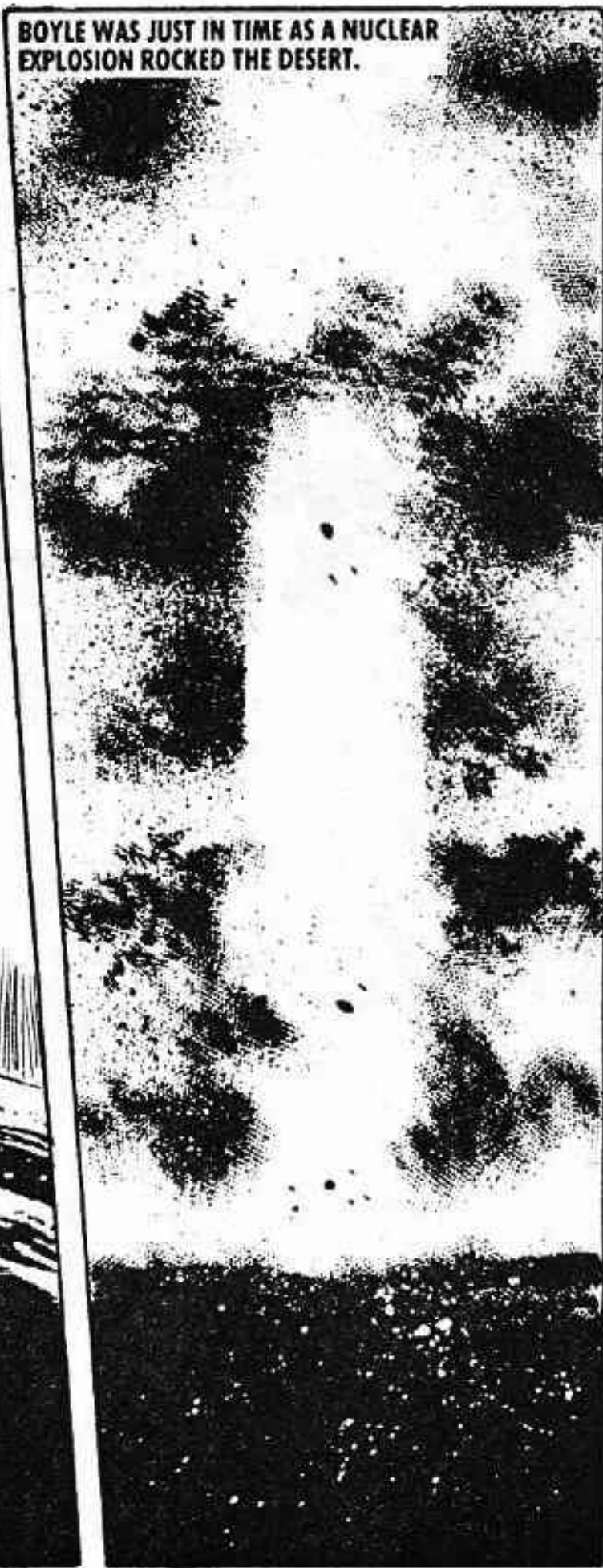
A black and white comic book panel showing a man from behind, firing the same large energy weapon. The weapon is pointed towards the left, and a massive, bright energy blast is being fired, creating a large, jagged explosion. The man is wearing a light-colored jacket. The background is a dark, starry space with some rocky terrain in the distance.

BOYLE FIRED ...




TRANSPORTING — FAST.

BOYLE WAS JUST IN TIME AS A NUCLEAR
EXPLOSION ROCKED THE DESERT.



BOYLE CAME OUT OF TRANSPORT ...





I AM WET. FORTUNATELY I AM UNRUSTABLE, BUT I DO NOT LIKE THE CONDITION.

SHUT UP — I'M THINKING. OBVIOUSLY THAT TRAP WAS TO DISPOSE OF THE RESIDENT LAW LORD ... ME ... AND LEAVE THE INTRUDER FREE TO DO AS HE WANTS WITH THIS PLANET.

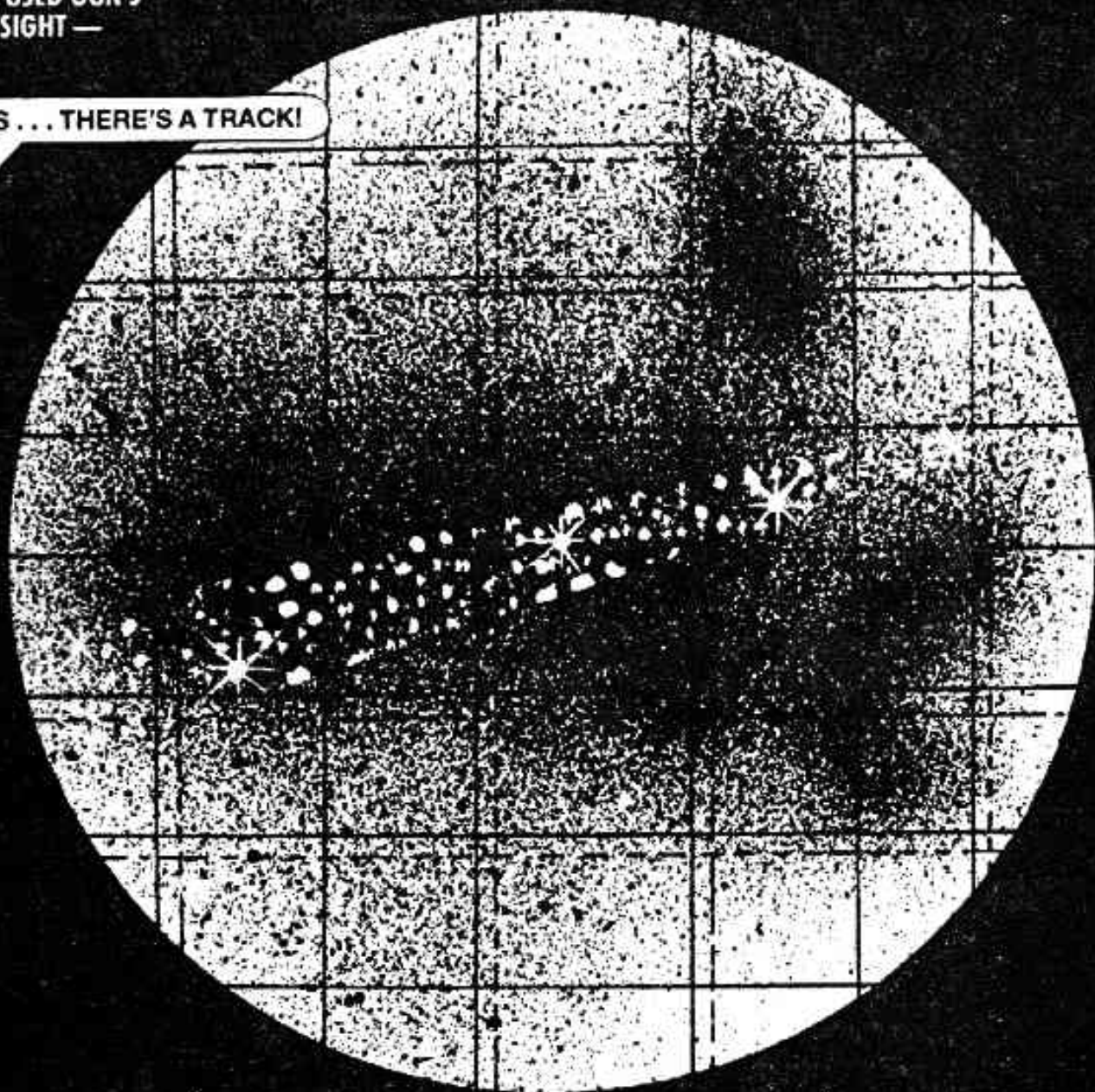
THE AFTERSHOCK KNOCKED BOYLE OVER —

THE SHIP MUST HAVE MOVED AFTER THE SETTING OF THE TRAP, BUT A BURST OF TAKE-OFF ENERGY WOULD HAVE BEEN DETECTED BY MOONSCAN — WHICH INDICATES SUB-LIGHT PROGRESS CLOSE TO THE PLANETARY SURFACE. SO WE ARE LOOKING FOR ION DISCHARGE.

FIVE MEGATON! THIS INTRUDER APPEARS TO THINK YOU WORTH ONLY A SMALL EXPLOSION.

BOYLE USED GUN'S
LASER SIGHT —

YES ... THERE'S A TRACK!



MAY AS WELL LEG IT
INSTEAD OF RISKING
OVERSHOOTING BY SHORT
TRANSPORT FLIPS.

A PHYSICAL EFFORT MADE
NECESSARY ONLY BY YOU
DECLINING TO WEAR A JET-PACK
LIKE ANY SENSIBLE LAW LORD,
BOYLE.



AERIAL ACTIVITY CAME WITH THE DAWN...



MAKING FOR THE AREA
OF THE EXPLOSION.

I AM PICKING UP MUCH ACTIVITY
ON MOST RADIO FREQUENCIES.
THAT MODEST FIVE MEGATONS
HAS CAUSED MUCH EXCITEMENT
AMONG THE PRIMITIVES.





THERE'S THE WARSHIP —
EMBEDDED IN SOLID ROCK.





BUT BEFORE BOYLE COULD FIRE—


I WOULD ADVISE AGAINST THE USE OF YOUR WEAPON, LAW LORD BOYLE.



HUH! WHERE DID YOU SPRING FROM? WHO ARE YOU?

I AM MURGOLI! I OWN THE VESSEL WHICH YOU INTEND TO VANDALISE. I WOULD NOT ADVISE SUCH AN ACTION AS IT WOULD TRIGGER A BOOBY-TRAP ... A QUANTUM BOMB CAPABLE OF TEARING THIS PLANET APART.





MURGOL, YOU
ARE UNDER ARREST.

GUN, GIVE ME A STUN-BEAM. I'M
TAKING NO CHANCES WITH THIS
JOKER.

BOYLE FIRED ...

AS ALWAYS, I OBEY — YET I
SHOULD MENTION ONE
DETAIL OF POSSIBLE
INTEREST ...

I DETECT NO PHYSICAL
PRESENCE OF THIS MURGOL.




BOYLE DIVED FOR COVER...

IT DETONATES AN
EXPLOSION OF
CHEMICAL GAS
VARIETY.

THE ROCKS ROLLED ON—





WHERE ARE YOU?

EXTEND YOUR LEFT
HAND . . . FURTHER — YES
WE HAVE CONTACT. I
WOULD SUGGEST FULL
CHARGE.

EXCELLENT — THOUGH
EVEN YOU CAN HARDLY
MISS WHEN
SURROUNDED BY YOUR
TARGET.



MURGOL KNEW MY NAME, HE LOOKED AND SPOKE AS AN EARTHLING — HE CAME PREPARED WITH A SUITABLE EARTHLY AIR CONVEYANCE. THIS IS NO RANDOM VISIT, BUT ONE CAREFULLY PLANNED.

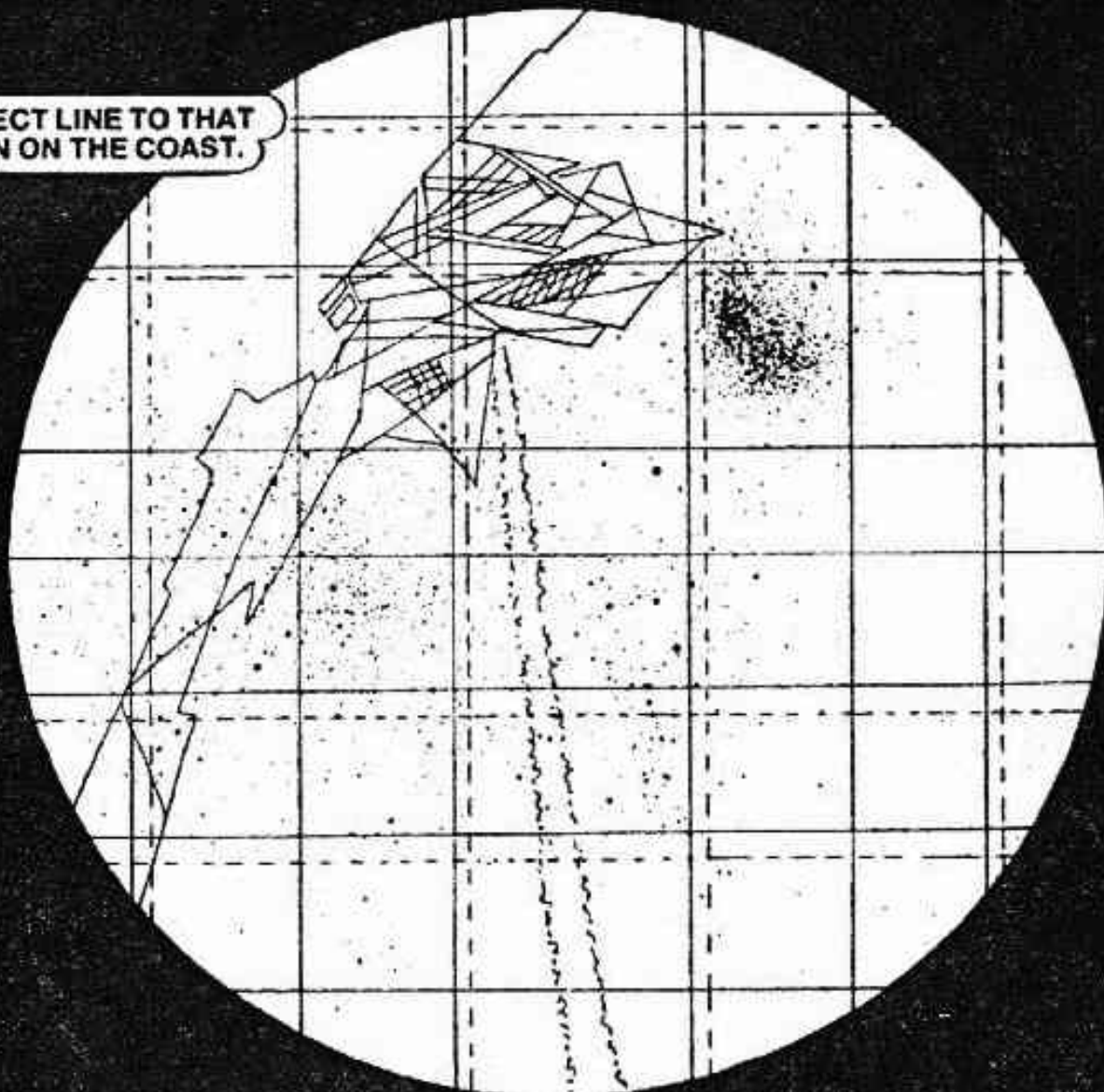
PART OF WHICH PLANNING REQUIRES YOUR ELIMINATION, BOYLE.



BETTER NOT TRY FOR THAT BURIED SHIP IN CASE HE WAS TRUTHFUL ABOUT THE BOOBY-TRAP. I ASSUME YOU TOOK A BEARING ON THAT HELICOPTER'S COURSE.

NATURALLY! ALLOW ME TO PROJECT IT OVER A MAP OF THE TERRAIN.

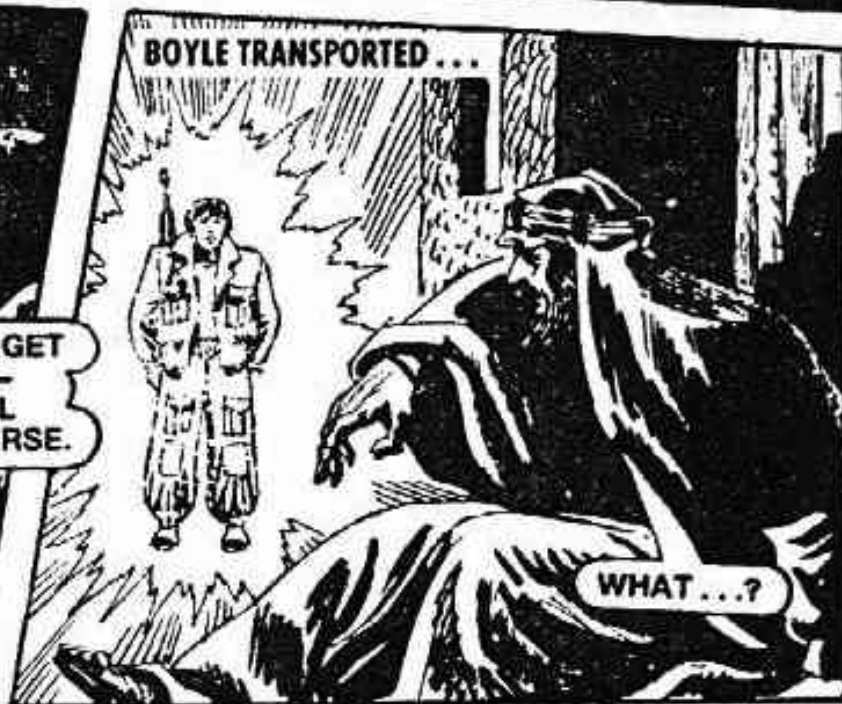
A DIRECT LINE TO THAT
TOWN ON THE COAST.



A QUICK FLIP SHOULD GET
US THERE AHEAD —
ASSUMING MURGOL
DOESN'T CHANGE COURSE.



BOYLE TRANSPORTED ...



WHAT ...?

IT WASN'T LONG BEFORE
THE HELICOPTER
APPEARED—



GOOD TIMING! IT'S SETTLING
ON THE ROOF OF THAT HOTEL.

BOYLE, EVEN
THESE PRIMITIVE
EARTHLINGS HAVE
EASIER WAYS OF
GAINING THE TOPS
OF SUCH
STRUCTURES.

STOP WORRYING. YOU
WON'T BE DROPPED
WHILE I HAVE NEED OF
YOU.





I HEAR VOICES! ONE IS A FAMILIAR
VOICE THAT NOW SPEAKS ARABIC.



MURGOL! LET ME HEAR
WHAT HE'S SAYING.



SHEIK AHMED, MY
DEMONSTRATION PACKAGE HAS
BEEN DELIVERED. I AM ABLE TO
OFFER YOU A SCORE OF IDENTICAL
FIVE MEGATON UNITS AT
IMMEDIATE DELIVERY.



RETAILING NUCLEAR BOMBS TO A
PROTECTED PLANET — VERY
ILLEGAL. TO WORK, WEAPON —
FIRST A STUN-BEAM FOR THE
EARTHLINGS.

BOYLE BROKE UP THE BUSINESS MEETING ...



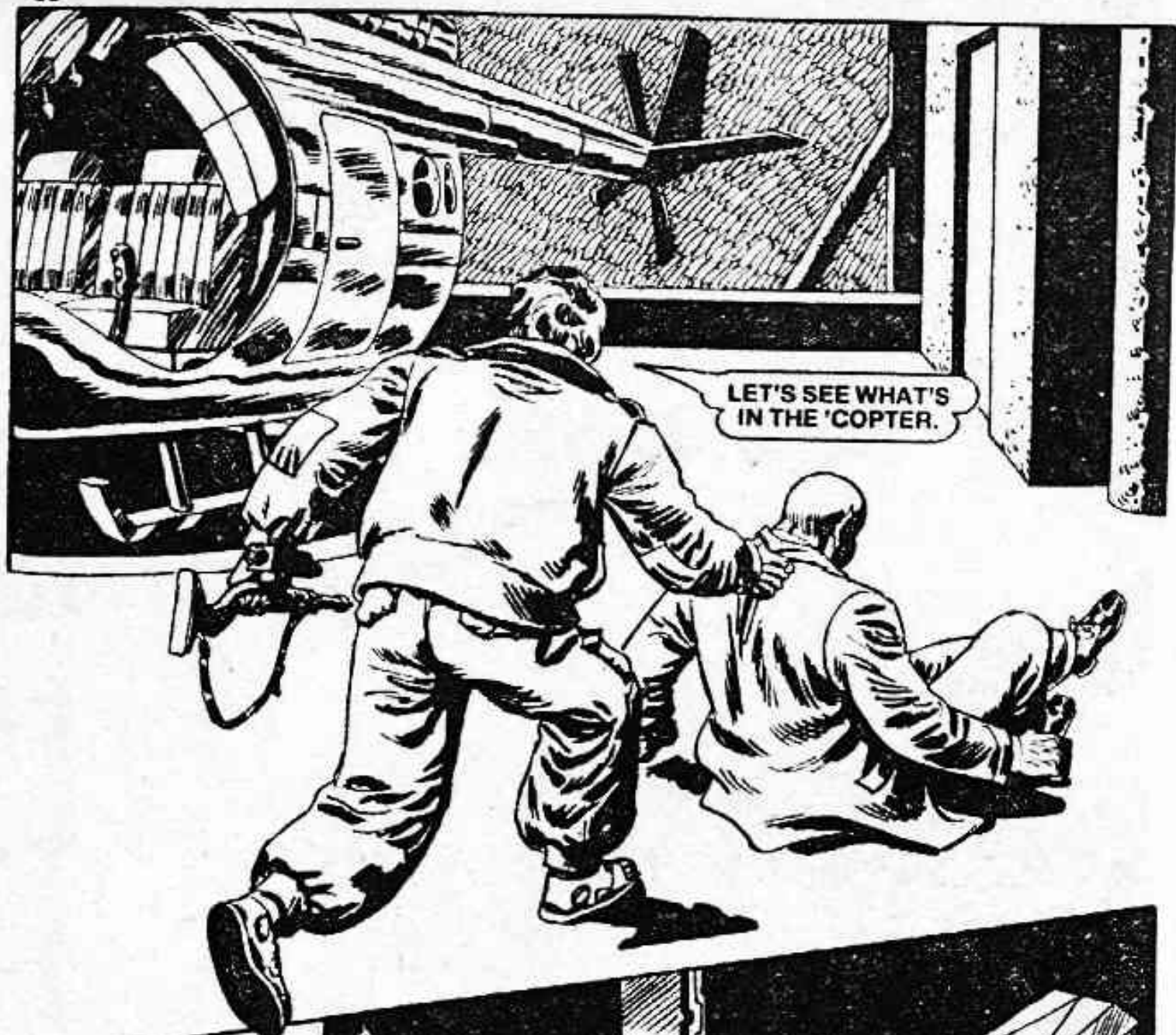





THERE HE GOES. WE'LL
TRY FOR A STUN.

THE STUN BEAM STRUCK HOME.








WE'LL USE THE HELICOPTER TO
SHIFT THE PRISONER TO
EARTH-BASE. HIS BURIED AND
BOOBY-TRAPPED SHIP CAN BE
DEALT WITH LATER.

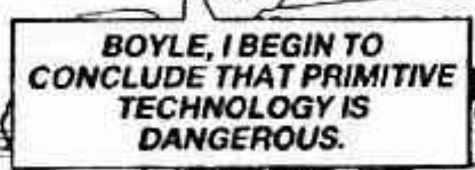


BOYLE, WHY USE THIS
PRIMITIVE MACHINE WHEN
WE CAN TRANSPORT?


BECAUSE TRANSPORTATION
WEARS ME OUT — EVERY
TIME I DO IT, I LOSE A FEW
MOLECULES.



WOW! I'M NOT
USED TO THIS THING.



BOYLE, I BEGIN TO
CONCLUDE THAT PRIMITIVE
TECHNOLOGY IS
DANGEROUS.



PLOT COURSE AND SPEED FOR
ARRIVAL AFTER NIGHTFALL.
FRIMLEY RESERVOIR, ENGLAND,
WILL BE A HANDY PLACE TO HIDE
THIS 'COPTER.



MURGOL'S HELICOPTER WAS
NO ORDINARY FLYING
MACHINE. WITH A SUB-
ATOMIC MOTOR
IT COULD TRAVEL VAST
DISTANCES AT HIGH SPEED.
THE RESERVOIR WAS
REACHED JUST AFTER DUSK.



THE ANTI-GRAV UNIT WILL
KEEP IT UNDERWATER.



AT LEAST MURGOL HAD THE
SENSE TO ADD A FEW CIVILISED
TOUCHES TO HIS CONTRAPTION.




BOYLE TRANSPORTED ...

PREPARE THE STASIS
TANK FOR A PRISONER.


VERY WELL, LAW LORD.





BOYLE, YOU CAN'T DEACTIVATE ME TILL YOU'VE HAD THE ALL CLEAR FROM HEADQUARTERS.

I KNOW THE REGULATIONS, BUT AT LEAST I DON'T HAVE TO KEEP PACKING YOU AROUND.



YOU CAN STILL HEAR ME, BOYLE. WE STILL HAVE MENTAL LINK.

TRUE, BUT YOU TRY ANY JABBERING IN MY MIND AND I'LL DEACTIVATE YOU AND PUT IN A DEFECTIVE UNIT REPORT.

MURGOL AWOKE...

STASIS — OH NO!
BOYLE, YOU ARE PILING
UP TROUBLE FOR
YOURSELF. OH, THE
THINGS I COULD TELL
YOU — AMAZING
THINGS.

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO MAKE A
STATEMENT. COMMENCE WITH
PERSONAL IDENTIFICATION.

A STASIS TANK WAS A DEEP FREEZE UNIT THAT
WAS USED TO HOLD PEOPLE IN SUSPENDED
ANIMATION.

HOK MURGOL, FREE-TRADER OF
MIRA-7. I ADMIT TO THE INTENT
OF SUPPLYING FORBIDDEN
MERCHANDISE TO PRIMITIVES.
MY PURPOSE BEING CREATION
OF POLLUTION THAT WOULD
CAUSE THE PLANET TO LOSE ITS
PROTECTED STATUS AND THROW
IT OPEN FOR GRABS TO A
CERTAIN COMPANY WITH THE
MEANS TO CLEANSE IT AND SO
BECOME POSSESSED OF A
DESIRABLE PROPERTY.

GIVE DETAILS OF THIS
CERTAIN COMPANY. NAME
NAMES.





BEAM MY REPORT TO HEADQUARTERS. I SHALL RESUME MY USUAL ROUTINE.

SEVEN EARTH DAYS LATER ...



ELEVEN AND DOUBLE TOP TO FINISH.

YOU CAN DO IT, RIK. YOUR LITTLE HOLIDAY CERTAINLY AIN'T SPOILED YOUR GAME.



ELEVEN — URH! TO ME ... I HEAR ...





DEPUTY COMMANDER. IS THIS AN OFFICIAL INSPECTION?

RELAX, LAW LORD. I MERELY CHANCED TO BE IN THIS PART OF THE QUADRANT AND DECIDED TO ORBIT MY WARSHIP OFF MOONSCAN AND TRANSPORT DOWN FOR A FRIENDLY CHAT.



SIR, YOU HAVE RELEASED MY PRISONER FROM STASIS.

LAD, YOUR BASE-UNIT HAS GIVEN ME A FULL REPORT AND I AM TAKING OVER THE CASE. WHERE HAVE YOU STORED THE FORBIDDEN MERCHANDISE THAT WILL PROVIDE MY EVIDENCE?



BOYLE WAS
SUDDENLY HELPLESS...





THE STASIS TANK ACQUIRED A NEW OCCUPANT ...


SIR — YOU!
BUT WHY?

THE USUAL GREEDY REASON!
SOON I SHALL BE RETIRED
AFTER A LIFE OF HARD DUTY
AND I WISH FOR A LITTLE
WEALTHY COMFORT IN MY
LAST FEW DECADES OF LIVING.

AN ITEM OF THE FORBIDDEN
MERCHANDISE WITH WHICH I
CAME PREPARED. LAKLAND IS
SETTING IT TO EXPLODE IN
TWENTY EARTH DAYS — AN
EXPLOSION UNLIKELY TO BE
NOTICED AMONG THE MANY
THAT SHOULD BE TAKING
PLACE BY THEN.

THEY MEAN TO START
A NUCLEAR WAR.

BUSINESS BECKONS, MURGOL.
FIRST RECOVERY OF THE
MERCHANDISE, THEN A
MEETING WITH YOUR SECOND
GROUP OF CUSTOMERS.




THEY'RE TRANSPORTING ... AND I'M
GOING INTO STASIS. ALREADY THE
FEELING DRAINS FROM MY BODY.


I WOULD SAY YOU HAVE
PROBLEMS, BOYLE.



GUN! I'D FORGOTTEN YOU WERE STILL ACTIVE. GET ME OUT OF HERE.



BOYLE, YOU FORGET ALSO I AM DESIGNED ONLY AS A REASONING AID. OF COURSE, I DO HAVE THE INTELLIGENCE TO CROSS A FEW WIRES AND GAIN FULL CONTROL OF MYSELF... IF I WERE NOT TOO DUTIFUL TO TAKE SUCH IRREGULAR ACTION.



GUN, WE'VE HAD OUR — ER, DIFFERENCES, BUT I'VE ALWAYS HAD TREMENDOUS RESPECT FOR YOU. NOW HELP ME, PLEASE... I AM PLEADING.



PLEADING!
I LIKE THAT.

THIS NEW RELATIONSHIP COULD
BE WORTH CONTINUING.

THE STASIS TANK DISINTEGRATED.

AHHHH!



BOYLE REACTIVATED HIS
BASE UNIT —

ACTIVATED... RECORD
IRREGULARITY —

SHUT UP AND PUT A SCAN
ON THAT RESERVOIR.

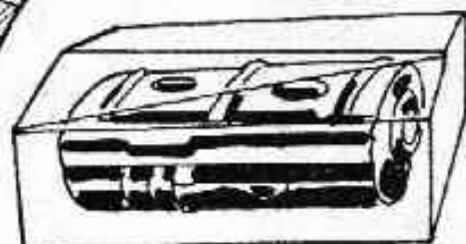
THEY'VE GOT THEIR
MERCHANDISE. PUT A TRACE ON
THAT HELICOPTER.

GUN, YOU CAN GET TO WORK ON
THAT FUSION PRESENT LEFT
WITH ME.

SAY PLEASE, REMEMBER BOYLE.
OUR NEW RELATIONSHIP.

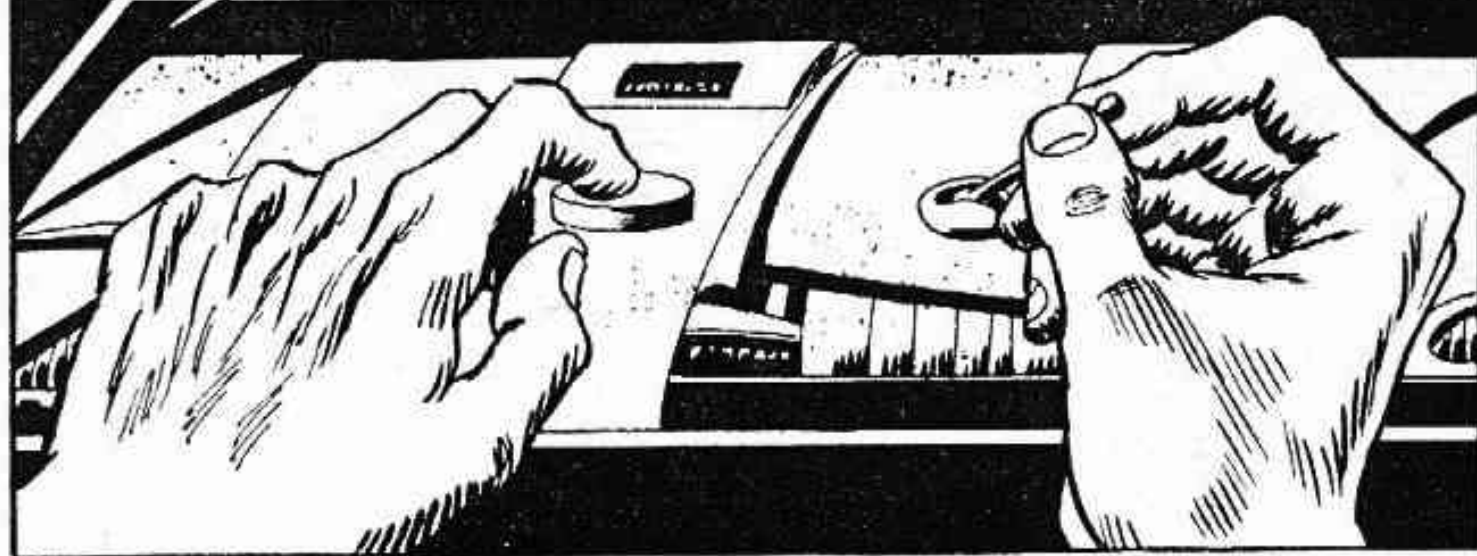
PLEASE — PLEASE!

VERY WELL. A CRUDE DEVICE
SUITABLE FOR USE BY PRIMITIVES.
OPENING THE TOP TWO SWITCHES
WILL TURN OFF THE TIMER.



THE DEVICE IS
NOW INACTIVE.

NOW ALL I CAN
DO IS WAIT.



BOYLE WAITED ...

I DO NOT ENJOY THE ADHARAN
VERSION OF CHESS.

BUT I DO. COME, BOYLE,
REMEMBER THE NEW
RELATIONSHIP.

TRACE TARGET HAS
LANDED. OCCUPANTS
ARE DISEMBARKING.
DESTINATION A SMALL
ISLAND IN THE IONIAN
SEA.

BOYLE KEYED IN THE CO-ORDINATES. AS THE
HELICOPTER LANDED.



BOYLE TRANSPORTED ...

A FAMILIAR VOICE THAT
EMPLOYS GREEK
SPEECH. I RE-TRANSMIT.



I CAN MAKE PAYMENT IN
ANY WORDLY CURRENCY
INSTEAD OF GEMSTONES,
GENTLEMEN.



NO, WE ARE QUITE TAKEN WITH
THESE AMUSING BAUBLES.

BOYLE JOINED THE PARTY ...

AN INTRUDER! HOW DID HE
PASS MY HOUSE GUARDS?

NO MATTER, MISTER
GIORGIOS. MY MAN WILL
ATTEND TO HIM.

LAKLAND MOVED —
VERY QUICKLY ...

WHAT THE ...









YOUR PARTNER MUST HAVE
FLIPPED TO HIS WARSHIP IN ORBIT
OFF MOONSCAN, BUT AT LEAST I
HAVE YOU.

WAIT — LISTEN! HE KNOWS THE
ENTRY CODE TO MY BURIED SHIP
— AND THERE ARE MORE FISSION
UNITS ABOARD. HE CAN DESTROY
THIS PLANET — KILL US ALL TO
REMOVE EVIDENCE AGAINST HIM.

MURGOL, I AM INCLINED TO
TRUST YOUR CRIMINAL
INTUITION.

GENTLEMEN — PLEASE. COME
BACK AND WE TALK BUSINESS.



BOYLE, SURELY NOT THE
PRIMITIVE MACHINE AGAIN!

I CAN'T LEAVE THAT CARGO OF
LETHAL MERCHANDISE LYING
AROUND LOOSE.



BOYLE TOOK OFF ...

MISTER GIORGIOS,
WHAT OF THE PERSON
TURNED TO ASH?

FETCH A BRUSH
AND PAN.



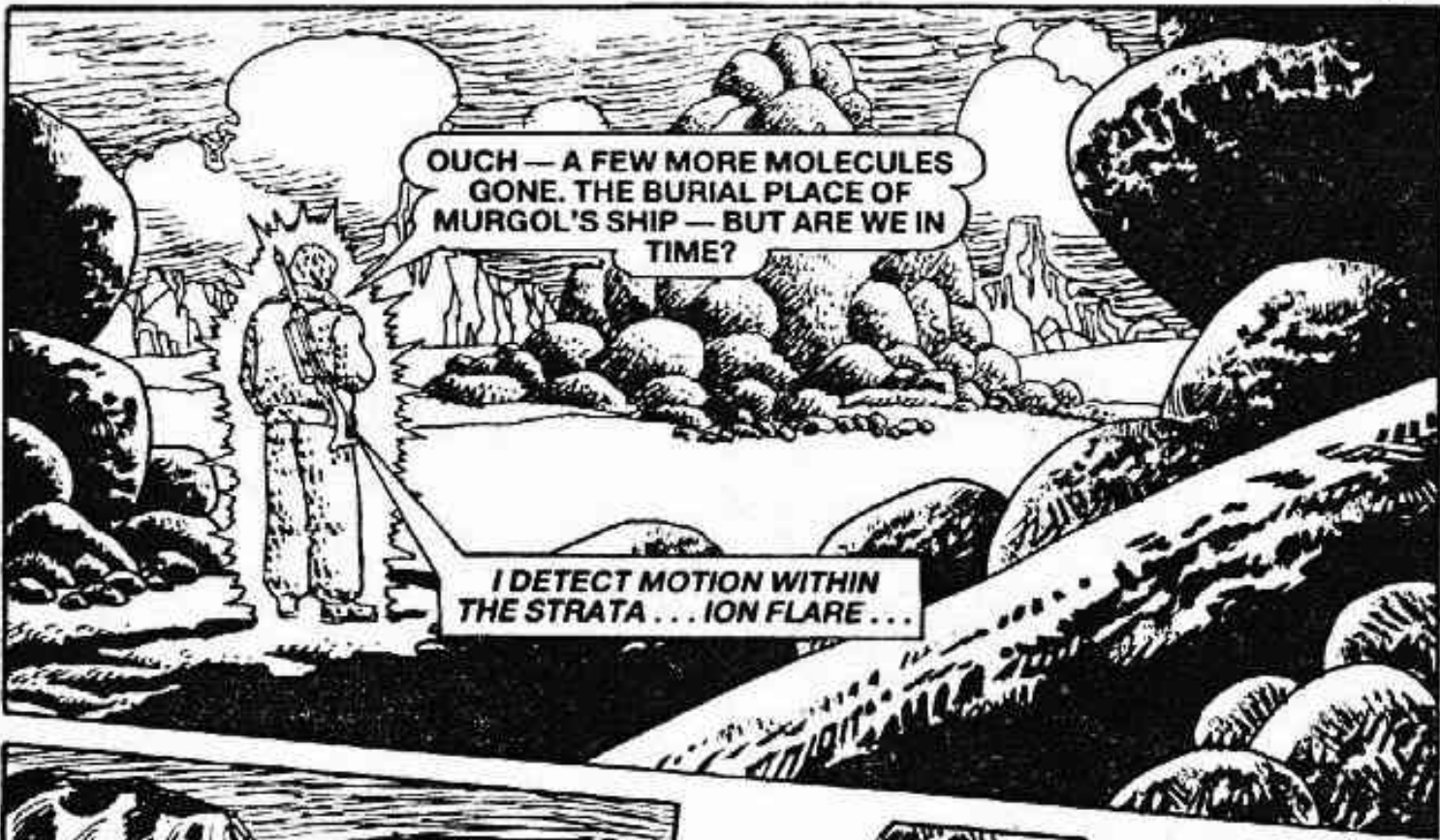
TRANSPORTING PROVIDES THE
DEPUTY-COMMANDER WITH A
CONSIDERABLE START OVER THIS
SLUGGISH MODE OF TRAVEL.

A DETAIL I HAVE NOT
OVERLOOKED. YOU MAY GIVE ME
STUN CAPABILITY.



SO WE CAN LEAVE HIM, PUT THE 'COPTER ON AUTOPILOT AND RECOVER IT LATER.





OUCH — A FEW MORE MOLECULES
GONE. THE BURIAL PLACE OF
MURGOL'S SHIP — BUT ARE WE IN
TIME?

I DETECT MOTION WITHIN
THE STRATA... ION FLARE...



JUST IN TIME!



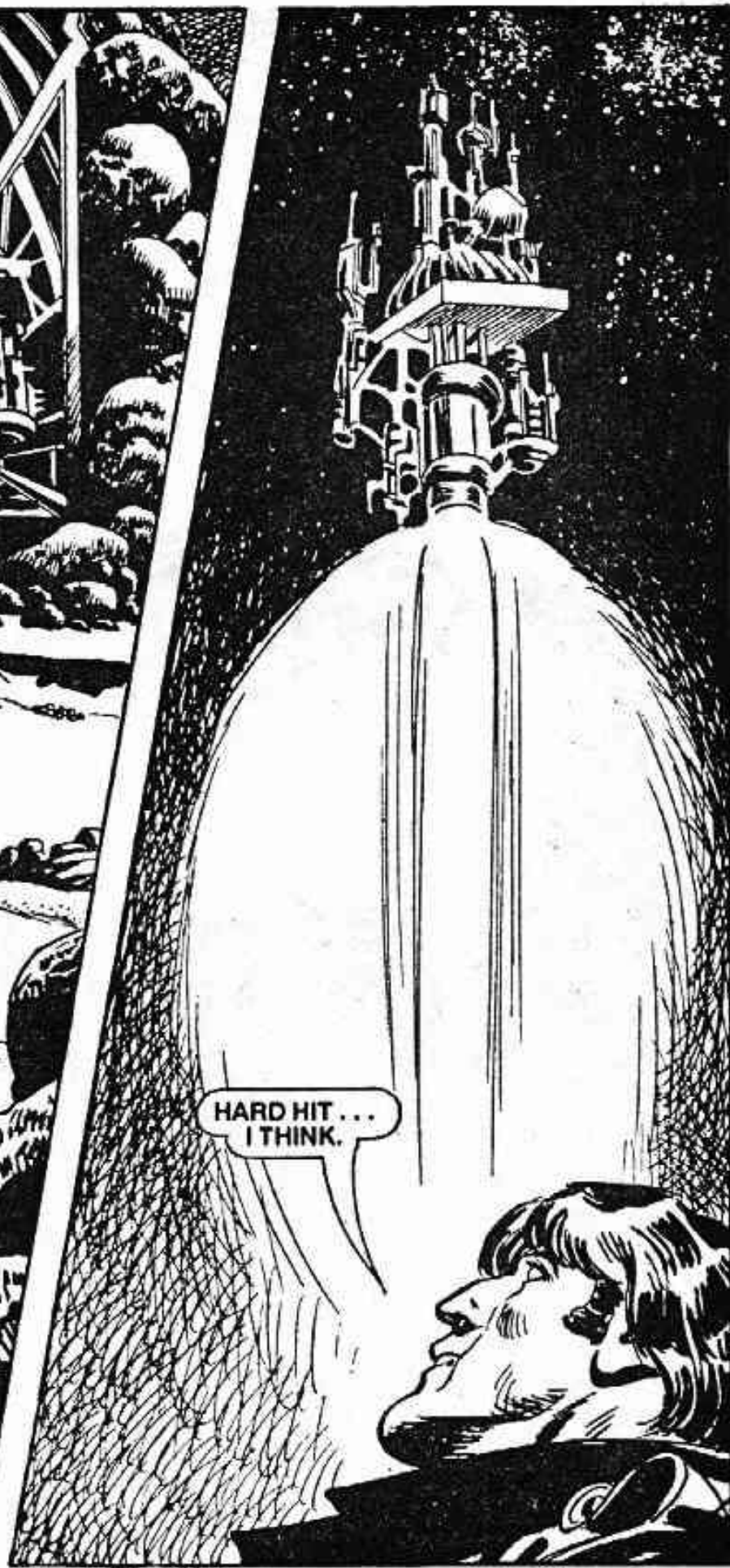
FULL CHARGE!

BETTER MAKE IT GOOD, BOYLE. I
ESTIMATE TIME FOR ONE SHOT
BEFORE THE SHIP'S ENERGY
SHIELD IS ACTIVATED.

BOYLE FIRED ...



HARD HIT ...
I THINK.



MOONSCAN REPORT: WARSHIP OF
TRADER TYPE DESTROYED BY
EXPLOSION SHORTLY AFTER TAKE-OFF
FROM PLANET


BOYLE DID SOME TIDYING UP ...

WARSHIP OF DEPUTY-
COMMANDER IS STILL IN ORBIT,
THUS INDICATING HE
TERMINATED ABOARD THE
DESTROYED TRADING VESSEL.
THE ILLEGAL MERCHANDISE IS IN
SAFE STORAGE.

ONE PRISONER HELD IN STASIS.
WRAP ALL THAT IN OFFICIAL
LANGUAGE AND BEAM IT TO
HEADQUARTERS.

VERY WELL,
LAW LORD BOYLE.

LATER—



THINK CAREFULLY, BOYLE —
UNLESS YOU WISH THIS TO BE
YOUR TENTH LOST GAME.

STOP GLOATING, YOU
CALCULATING NODULE. I COULD
ALWAYS HAVE THE LAST MOVE BY
DEACTIVATING YOU.

We at "Starblazer" want to bring you the very best in Fantasy Fiction. To do that we need *your* help.

So that we can produce the kind of stories you want to read, please fill in the questionnaire on this page and send it to "Starblazer", D. C. Thomson & Co. Ltd., 185 Fleet Street, London EC4A 2HS.

If you don't want to cut your issue of "Starblazer", you can copy the questionnaire onto a sheet of paper.

And there's a chance to win a full-colour print of one of our new-style wraparound covers!

The senders of the ten letters which we judge to be the most informative will each receive one of the prints. We want to hear from you NOW!

Name **Age**

Address

What kind of science fiction do you most enjoy? Please tick appropriate boxes. If you dislike any type of story, place a cross in the box.	SUPERHEROES <input type="checkbox"/>	FANTASY
	DUNGEONS	SWORD AND
	AND DRAGONS <input type="checkbox"/>	SORCERY
	POST <input type="checkbox"/>	HORROR
	HOLOCAUST <input type="checkbox"/>	STAR WARS
	ADVENTURE <input type="checkbox"/>	DR. WHO
	HUMOUR <input type="checkbox"/>	MYSTERY

Where do you normally buy your STARBLAZER? _____

Which is your favourite STARBLAZER story? _____

Which is your favourite character? _____

Which is your favourite science fiction movie? _____

Have you any comments to make about STARBLAZER... good or bad? _____

THE LAW LORD

His name is
Boyle!
His business is
law, and his
beat is planet
Earth.
He is a
protector, a
galactic law
lord, the
judge, jury and
executioner.

